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NSC

13 MAY 75
(EVENING)

MAY 13/1975
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(no given
AS SUCH)

DCI BRIEFING FOR
13 MAY NSC MEETING

THE MAYAGUEZ INCIDENT

- I. The Mayaguez remains anchored ~~about 300 yards~~ off Koh Tang island.
 - A. A transfer of personnel from the ship to the island occurred between 0600 and 0700 EDT today, and it seems likely that ~~the~~ most of the crew have now been moved to the island.

II.

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the Khmer Communists are also holding a number of Vietnamese refugees and may be keeping them on Koh Tang or some other offshore island.

- III. The Khmer Communists appear to have augmented their naval force in the vicinity of the Mayaguez since the ship's seizure.

- A. This afternoon a total ~~of~~ ^{small} five patrol craft (Swift?)

~~that at least one of these had been sunk by US air~~
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- 1. Small caliber ground fire from both the boats and the island has been continuing against US aircraft in the area.

At least crews
taken under attack

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IV. The Communists have the capability to further reinforce.

A. They probably captured intact most of the military equipment under GKR control prior to the fall of Phnom Penh.

B. In naval strength, the GKR had between 22 and 25 armed patrol craft operating out of ^{Ream}~~Ream~~ Naval Base in Kampot Province. Of these, 17 to 19 were coastal patrol boats, 4 to 5 were riverine patrol boats, and one was a submarine chaser.

1. Current aerial reconnaissance indicates that the Khmer Communists have at least 13 of these patrol craft in their possession.

2. The KC probably have enough qualified personnel to operate them.

3. We believe that the ¹⁵KC will be unable to ^{move}~~divert~~ other craft from the naval base ^{down the Mekong around} near Phnom Penh ¹to the Gulf of Thailand in the next few days.

C. As for air strength, preliminary analysis of 12 May photography showed three T-28

fighters and a total of six ~~C-47 and C-131~~ transports

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aircraft at Kompong Som airfield. There is also a substantial ^{remaining} number of T-28 aircraft ^{the 100-odd} ^{left} at Pochentong Airfield near Phnom Penh ^{when it fell.}

1. The KC have no qualified pilots, but there is some chance that ^{some} ~~some~~ former KAF pilots ^{would fly in} ~~could be used to~~ support of naval operations in the Gulf of Thailand.

2. Even if former KAF pilots were employed, their effectiveness would be minimal in the face of hostile ^{US} aircraft.

D. In ground Strength, KC combat forces at Kompong Som total some 2,000 troops, ~~including elements of the KC 3rd Division and local force units.~~ This force could be quickly augmented ~~however,~~ by the remaining 14, 000 troops scattered throughout southwestern Cambodia. Any such movements probably would be undetected and some may have taken place already.

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1. At last count there were at least eight 105-mm howitzers at Ream, and more could be sent from other areas.
 2. To transport troops by sea, the KE have at least three military craft ^(2 LSU, 1 LTU) at Ream and Kompong Som, with a minimum capability to move 1,600 troops at once.
 3. The May 12 photography also shows ~~the~~ five freighters, eleven barges, two tugboats, and several dozen logistics craft in the Kompong Som - Ream area.
- ~~1. The Mayaguez remains anchored about 300 yards off Hoh Tang island. A transfer of personnel from the ship to the island occurred between 0600 and 0700 EDT today and it seems likely that all or most of the crew have now been moved to the island.~~

~~the Khmer Communists are also holding a number of Vietnamese refugees and may be keeping them on Koh Tang or some other offshore island.~~

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- V. In the first public Chinese response to the incident, vice-premier Teng Hsiao-ping told newsmen in Paris that "there is nothing China could do" should the US elect to use force to free the ship and crew. Teng denied any knowledge of a possible Chinese mediatory role.
- A. Meanwhile East German commentary has portrayed the incident as evidence of a new US "provocation" against Cambodia.

Thai

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KOH TANG

Based on December 1973 observations by an American who was on Koh Tang.

--There were two navigational stations on the nother/north-western part of the island. Each had an antenna of about 150 feet and a small hut housing a generator.

--There were about eight areas on the north/northwestern section of the island where helicopters could land; these were near the navigational stations.

--The only feasible landing area was about half-way down on the eastern side of the island. Even here, however, a 128 foot boat with a 12-15 draft could only get within 400-500 meters of the shore.

--The island was covered wth shrub and scrub brush, about 20-30 feet in height.

--There were no inhabitants on the island, no roads (only foot trails), no structures except for the navigational stations, and no airstrip.

--Water depths around the island--at about five kilometers off-shore--were 34-41 fathoms on the west, and 22-33 fathoms on the east.

--The prospects for oil in the area of the island is very good. There are also tin and manganese on the island.

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